



Shared Harvest FOODBANK

**SHARED HARVEST FOODBANK
FY2026–29 STRATEGIC PLAN**

A Plan for Shared Harvest's Next Chapter

Shared Harvest Foodbank plays a critical role in reducing hunger and strengthening food access across southwest Ohio. Over the past seven years, Shared Harvest has grown significantly. Its budget has doubled to \$22.7 million in FY 2025–26, supporting a **57% increase in meals distributed**. Today, Shared Harvest distributes more than **12 million pounds of food annually** through its foodbank and a network of more than 100 member agencies, including food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. The network feeds more than **47,000 individuals each month**.

To guide this next chapter, Shared Harvest completed a six-month strategic planning process for FY2026–29, facilitated by New Venture Advisors. The process gathered input from neighbors, member agencies, board members, and staff to better understand strengths, challenges, opportunities, and needs across the service area.

The plan identifies two core goals that describe what Shared Harvest is working toward to better serve neighbors and member agencies across southwest Ohio. To achieve these goals, Shared Harvest identified four strategic priorities, along with key activities, resource needs, and metrics to track progress.

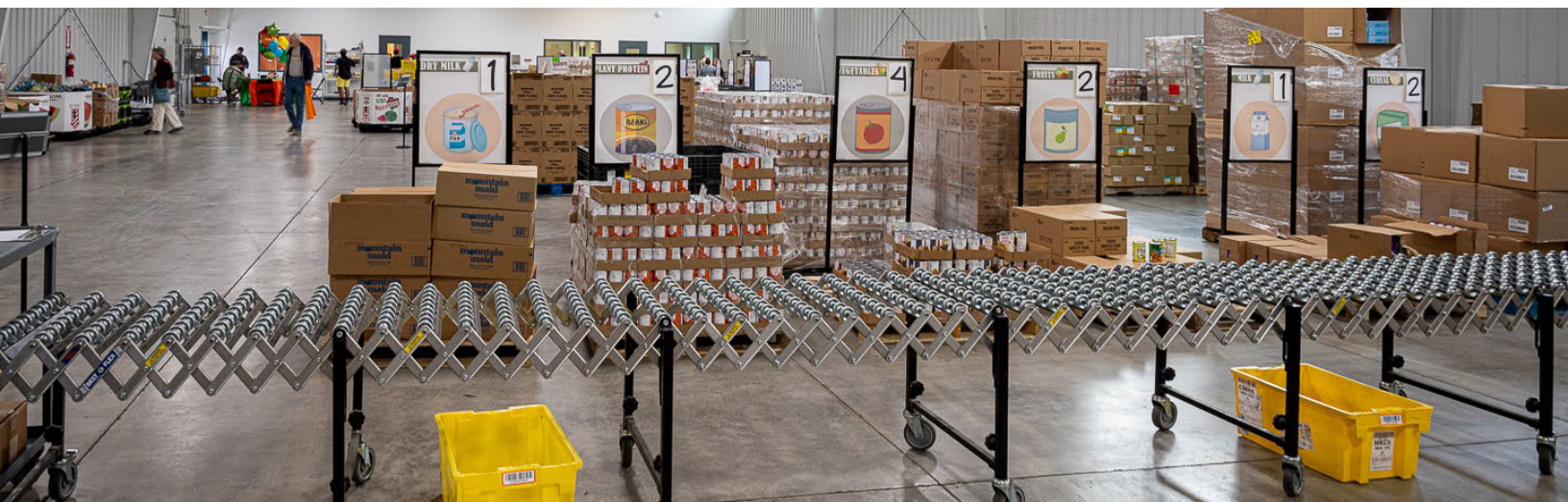
Together, these goals and priorities provide a practical, forward-looking roadmap for the next three years. The plan reflects Shared Harvest's commitment to meeting today's needs while continuing to build a stronger, more responsive network for the future.



Strategic Priority 1: Distribution and Operations Improvements

Strengthen Shared Harvest's distribution and operating systems across the service area to improve routing, fleet utilization, ordering, and automation, while reducing regional gaps in access, quality, and delivery frequency.

Shared Harvest's distribution and operational systems form the backbone of how food moves from donors and other food sources through food bank warehouses and on to member agencies and neighbors across the service area. Strengthening and optimizing these existing systems will help Shared Harvest move more food, more reliably, to better meet community needs across the service area.



To achieve this, our key activities include:

- Strengthen delivery and routing systems to improve scheduling, fleet utilization, load efficiency, and service consistency.
- Improve member agency ordering and communication by clarifying communication protocols and streamlining member-facing technology.
- Support more responsive food distribution by piloting tailored delivery options and assessing the role of direct distribution in meeting neighbor needs.
- Increase warehouse efficiency by developing internal targets that support timely, reliable movement of food.
- Advance nutrition-focused distribution practices by implementing Healthy Eating Research (HER) guidelines tagging to help identify and prioritize healthy food options.

Strategic Priority 2: Infrastructure Capacity

Invest in and improve Shared Harvest's infrastructure, including warehouse space, cold storage, and fleet to improve system-wide distribution and geographic reach.

Shared Harvest's physical infrastructure, including warehouse space, cold storage, fleet, equipment, and facility footprint, directly shapes how much food the organization can move, where it can be moved, and how efficiently it reaches neighbors across the service area. While strategy 1 focuses on optimizing existing systems and processes, this strategy addresses the need for new and expanded infrastructure to meet current demand and support future growth.



To achieve this, our key activities include:

- Assess and strengthen capacity at the primary facility in Fairfield, including warehouse space, cold storage, equipment, and other facility needs.
- Explore infrastructure solutions for the northern service area, including a feasibility study and operating model for a potential satellite site or alternative distribution approach.
- Evaluate and modernize the truck fleet and delivery equipment.
- Develop infrastructure and systems that reduce food waste and extend the usable life of perishable food.

Strategic Priority 3: Workforce Support

Strengthen staffing, volunteer, and workforce systems to improve operational efficiency, sustain service delivery, and support future growth.

Staff and volunteers are essential to Shared Harvest's ability to distribute food across the service area, support member agencies, and respond to neighbor needs. By strengthening support for staff and volunteers, Shared Harvest can help ensure the people carrying out this work have the capacity and resources they need to serve the community well.



To achieve this, our key activities include:

- Strengthen internal staffing systems by updating the organizational structure, staff roles and performance review processes.
- Improve volunteer coordination and support by assessing current systems and strengthening coordination with member agencies.
- Build workforce partnerships and service pathways through service programs, service learning, and longer-term workforce development opportunities.
- Expand staff training and professional development to build staff skills and leadership capacity.

Strategic Priority 4: External Support

Build community, policy, funding, and institutional support for food access and health-related initiatives.

External support and partnerships play a significant role in Shared Harvest's ability to distribute food throughout its service area. This includes food sourcing partnerships, financial donations, grants, volunteers, advocacy, and collaboration with community organizations and institutions. Strong relationships across the food access network help Shared Harvest source and distribute foods that better reflect community needs, including fresh and health-supportive foods. These partnerships also improve coordination with health and social services and build broader public understanding of the resources and investments needed to address food insecurity.



To achieve this, our key activities include:

- Develop and implement a fundraising plan to support the resources and investments needed to advance the strategic plan.
- Develop a coordinated community engagement plan to guide partnership development, communications, and public engagement.
- Assess opportunities for health-related food initiatives, including Food Is Medicine partnerships and other approaches that connect food access with health outcomes.